1. What are the key characteristics of authentic assessment?

*Authentic assessments are designed to evaluate students’ performance in tasks related to real-world scenarios and context. These assessments must require active learning on behalf of the students so that they are required to construct individualized meaning to what they have learned in school. In this sense, comprehension in the course material must be translated to real life scenarios. Additionally, authentic assessments must ask students to complete tasks associated with the work of individuals in the field of study connected to the class curriculum. Lastly, authentic assessment should allow for open-ended responses where understanding of the material can be expressed in a variety of ways.*

1. How do authentic assessments and traditional tests differ?

*While traditional tests prompt students to give the “one right answer,” authentic assessments encourage divergent responses from students as their demonstration of understanding should reflect individualized and contextualized meaning. Furthermore, traditional tests are only relevant to the classroom, and the lessons from them are often difficult to relate to real-world issues and concerns. Authentic assessments ask students to engage in the classroom material outside of the classroom context.*

1. Choose an example of an authentic assessment you find online that is appropriate to the subject and grade level you are observing or preparing to teach.

*One assessment developed by the Michigan State Board of Education (click* [*here*](http://michigan.gov/documents/MI_Auth_12350_7.AssmtMan.pdf) *for the link, and scroll down to page 62 on the document) asks students to write a policy response suggesting courses of action to the president and Congress in reference to the budge crisis. This assessment is authentic in that it addresses a real-world, and particularly relevant, public policy issue. Not only will the issue of budget deficits, revenue generation, and spending cuts influence them individually, but also students will need to understand these issues as they become part of the voting public. The question requires a constructed response that will differ given the political opinions of the student. Public policy is almost always relevant to a social studies classroom, and particularly in the context of upper division IB students. Students must respond in writing, which encourages in-depth communication. The two downfalls of the assessment are that it does not necessarily extend to an audience beyond the classroom (although this could change if the students wrote the policy recommendations in letter format to a local representative or senator). Moreover, no scoring rubric is provided (although this could also be easily altered by the instructor giving the assessment).*

1. Examine the diagram, *Balancing the Two Faces of E-Portfoloios.* What are the two types of ePortfolios?

*The first type of ePortfolio centers on learning and collaboration where the primary purpose is learning and reflection. The audience is primarily internal, suggesting that while the activity is online, the community to which it is directed is the classroom and teacher.*

*The second type of ePortfolio has students showcase their own achievements so that students can demonstrate proficiency and individual accountability. The audience is primary beyond the classroom, or external.*

1. How are the two types of portfolios created?

*The Learning and Collaboration ePortfolio emphasizes process over product. The goal is learning and reflection, so students are expected to demonstrate that, as learners, they are actively involved in the online community (in a blog or social network).*

*The Showcasing Achievement ePortfolio emphasizes product and is set up as more of a display case of student success. Therefore, the student may create a webpage where products can be showcased for the larger online community.*

1. In what ways are the two portfolios similar?

*The two portfolios, while they emphasize different goals, are very similar. First and foremost, the two portfolios have students develop their computer and Internet literacy. In either case, they must be able to understand how to access online sources of information and produce online sources of information. Secondly, they are able to demonstrate mastery of a school concept in an online forum. While one presents information to an internal audience and the other to an external audience, both portfolios are either explicitly or implicitly social and require in-depth communication.*